

Gender Dimensions of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)

A Commented Bibliography



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Introduction

This commented bibliography contains summaries of academic articles, books, book chapters, reports and policy briefs on the gender dimensions of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). The bibliography mainly focuses on literature from 2000 and up to 2015, but with some classical contributions from the late 1990s included. The literature reviewed focuses on a variety of aspects related to the gender dimension of DDR processes, such as women as actors and victims, implications of the perceptions of masculinity, transitional justice, the political economy of DDR processes, gendered identity, and finally, the contextual aspects of DDR processes. The topics are all related to one another. The literature on transitional justice and gender mainly focuses on aspects related to women as victims. The literature on masculinity reveals that, most often, the dominant perceptions of masculinity tend to produce female victims. The focus on the political economy of DDR processes, on the other hand, highlights the more active participation of women in conflicts and the failure to recognize this – taking into account that women often are not sufficiently included in DDR processes. In the following, literature grouped under the mentioned headings will be reviewed, while keeping in mind that they are strongly related.

Female Fighters – Actors or Victims in DDR?

In much of the early literature on gender dimensions of DDR – from the 1980s and 1990s – the focus has been on women as victims in conflicts and DDR processes. However, also some of the more recent literature – on transitional justice and gender – takes on this focus, as it mainly highlights the weaknesses of juridical procedures and the failures to provide women with adequate juridical processes, protection and justice. Many of the institutional weaknesses have been pointed out by Buckley-Zistel et al. (2012). A more in-depth analysis of the process in East Timor, by Harris Rimmer (2010), shows how national context and the strategies chosen by international actors to meet these particular challenges can affect the process of transitional justice for female victims. However, this part of the bibliography also reviews several pieces of literature that emphasize the role of women as active participants in armed groups – often as combatants – and sometimes also assisting in logistics. Most of the female combatants have been neither recognized nor given a space in DDR processes, and several examples of this are found in African countries, and particularly in Sierra Leone, as highlighted in the articles by Mazurana and Eckerbom Cole (2013), Macdonald (2008) and Mackenzie (2009). Pieces of this literature, such as Macdonald (2008), emphasize that women also take part in violence and torture, and that this has been neglected as it contrasts with the general view of women as peaceful. A quite illustrative example of the neglect of women's active participation in conflicts is found in the DDR process in Aceh, in the book chapter written by Marhaban (2012). In this chapter she reveals that none of the 500 women from *Inong Balee Battalion*, the female wing of the insurgency movement in Aceh, GAM, were listed in the peace agreement and consequently did not participate in the DDR process. As a contrast, the wives of male combatants received some economic compensation. However, examples from Latin America identify a more inclusive attitude towards – and public recognition of – the role of women as active combatants in conflicts. This is for example seen in the studies of peace processes and DDR processes in Colombia in different time periods: in the study of the DDR process of M19 in Colombia by Patiño, Grabe and García-Durán (2012), and in a shorter article about the current peace

process between the Colombian government and FARC-EP by Menochal and Domingo (2015). It is also observed in the article on Guatemalan female fighters by Hauge (2008), which is summarized under the heading of 'DDR and Gendered Identity' below.

The neglect of female fighters' active participation is often observed to take place within the framework of securitization and desecuritization. The DDR process is seen as more important for men, to avoid discontent, unemployment, idleness and further mobilization to violence. This topic is also discussed in the article by Jennings (2009) under the heading of political economy of DDR processes.

MacKenzie, Megan, 2009. 'Securitization and Desecuritization: Female Soldiers and the Reconstruction of Women in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone', *Security Studies*, Vol 18, No. 2, pp. 241–261.

In this article Megan MacKenzie highlights how men and masculinity are securitized post-conflict, whereas women – even when they operate in highly securitized roles such as soldiers – are desecuritized and, in effect, their roles in post-conflict policy making are de-emphasized. MacKenzie's article is based on a case study of the DDR process in Sierra Leone, where she has conducted more than fifty interviews with female former soldiers. MacKenzie holds that the DDR program in Sierra Leone “effectively (re)constructed female soldiers as ‘wives’, ‘camp followers’, or ‘sex slaves’” with the purpose of desecuritizing them and thus to distinguish them from securitized male soldiers. She also blames international NGOs for playing a role in this. In contrast to this, she refers to her own interviews where women were quick to point out which armed group they were a part of, which rank they had, and which roles they carried out during the war. One woman identified herself as a commander within the RUF and in general several of the women said that they had voluntarily joined a particular faction. The duties carried out by the women were quite diverse, but over 75 percent of those interviewed declared that they had been involved in active combat. This is so, although a significant number of women also reported to have been acting as sex slaves. Thus the picture is quite mixed. However, only a few of the women participated in the DDR process, and the reasons they gave for this in MacKenzie's interviews were quite varied, ranging from no longer possessing a gun, lack of information, stigmatization and shame, pride, and that they in general thought the DDR program was tailored for men. The problem with eliminating women from the category of soldier and security priority is that it also removes them from significant policy discourses. In addition, MacKenzie emphasizes that the post-conflict period is in many ways more difficult for the female ex-combatants as different forms of gendered violence continue, and that their social and political choices post-conflict are in many ways more constrained by notions of loyalty, duty, and identity than during the armed conflict.

Marhaban, Shadia, 2012. 'The reintegration of ex-combatants in post-war Aceh: remaining challenges to a gender-blind planning and implementation process', ch. 12, pp. 192–207 in (eds.) Véronique Dudouet, Hans J. Giessmann and Karin Planta, *Post-War Security Transitions: Participatory peacebuilding after asymmetric conflicts*. London and New York: Routledge.

In general, the book edited by Dudouet, Giessmann and Planta covers a wide variety of topics related to DDR and SSR and a set of different case studies. The most relevant case studies to the topic of DDR and gender are the chapters by Shadia Marhaban on Aceh, and the chapter by Patiño, Grabe and García Durán on the M19 in Colombia. Of

nine different case studies, only four of them have a focus – or limited focus – on the gender dimension. In addition to Aceh and Colombia, the others are El Salvador and Nepal. Chapter two, 'Deficits and blind spots in existing approaches to post-war security promotion' written by the editors of the book, has two pages on "Lack of adequate gender perspectives". They emphasize that DDR programs tend to reflect a double standard for male and female combatants as women are not considered a "security concern" and are put into the desecuritized development and programming box, giving them less benefits from the DDR programs. In general they also add that, "real changes from the field are yet to materialize" (p.36).

Chapter twelve, by Shadia Marhaban, starts out with a relatively broad focus on the reintegration process in Aceh, including institutional weaknesses, a narrow focus on financial compensation, the exclusion of the local population as beneficiaries and the failure to address the needs of Acehnese women in general. However, the most important contribution of this chapter is its focus on female combatants in the Aceh conflict, and how these were completely excluded from the DDR process. The insurgency movement in Aceh, Gerakan Atjeh Merdeka (GAM), had its own female wing, the '*Inong Balee Battalion*', comprised of approximately 500 women. These women had undergone combat training, and while a few of them bore arms during the conflict, most were mainly active in logistical, medical and intelligence support. Despite the significant contribution of *Inong Balee*, the movement, GAM, failed to acknowledge its very existence when providing the 'official' number of 3,000 male combatants during the peace negotiations. The author of the chapter, Shadia Marhaban, points to the negotiation process as an important part of the explanation for this. GAM had only two female members among its team of 12 negotiators, while the Indonesian government had none. Furthermore there was no specific agenda on women. This was so despite massive international involvement in the Aceh peace process. The treatment of the *Inong Balee* women stands in contrast to widows of male combatants that received compensation under a program of assistance to civilian victims of the conflict. Marhaban ends her chapter by stating that "Neither the central government, nor the Acehnese government or the international agencies have any specific programme targeting female ex-combatants" (p. 203).

Patiño Otty, Vera Grabe and Mauricio García-Durán, 2012. 'The M19's reinsertion process: Challenges and lessons learnt', ch. 3, pp. 43–59 in (eds.) Véronique Dudouet, Hans J. Giessmann and Karin Planta, *Post-War Security Transitions: Participatory peacebuilding after asymmetric conflicts*. London and New York: Routledge.

This chapter is co-authored by Mauricio García-Durán, who is a leading Colombian scholar, and Otty Patiño and Vera Grabe who are both former commanders of the M19 and played important roles in the movement's political transformation after demobilization. The chapter focuses on the initiation and implementation of the dialogue process and on the demobilization and reintegration process, paying considerable attention to the political process and the security situation of the ex-combatants. The M19's process was particular in the sense that it was the general commander of the organization at that time, Jaime Bateman, who formulated an initiative aimed at 'putting an end to the armed conflict voluntarily, that is, through dialogue'. The talks between the government and the M19 began in January 1989 and lasted until March 1990, when the guerrilla movement demobilized and disarmed. The chapter highlights the political character of the negotiations, as the process was aimed at guaranteeing the former combatants the possibility to run for a political campaign

or elections. The chapter contains a very informative section entitled 'The gender perspective in the peace process with the M19'.

During the conflict women represented about 20 percent of the M19's membership in the rural areas and 50 percent in the cities, and they played different roles. No women were among the five members of the Command, but there were two in the High Command: Vera Grabe and Nelly Vivas. In 1985 the role of women became more recognized, as seven women were included in the national leadership group. Among these were three mothers of central commanders as 'honorary leaders' in recognition of their work with political prisoners. The women also became genuine symbols of the capacity to negotiate. This was for example the case of Carmenza Londeño who became the negotiator during the M19's occupation of the Dominican Embassy. In spite of all this, the term 'gender' was not actually 'discovered' by the M19's female combatants until the peacebuilding process. A group of women came together to reflect and think about the role of women as promoters of peace in the Santo Domingo camp. They called themselves 'Women of April'.

The authors of the book chapter proceed to explain how some of these women also came to play important roles in the post-conflict phase. Vera Grabe became the first and only M19 member to be elected to the House of Representatives in elections held two days after arms were surrendered in March 1990. Issues of women's rights began to acquire more importance in Colombian politics in 1991, and thus for the women of the M19 the peacebuilding process offered opportunities. Thus the authors of the chapter write that "In the Senate, the M19 was a pioneer in the creation of a specialised unit dedicated to women's issues and aimed at following up on legislative initiatives and proposing new ones. It is worth pointing out that, at that time, there were no secretariats or government agents specifically devoted to women's and gender issues" (p. 53). Thus, although there was little consciousness about gender issues both in the M19 and in the Colombian society in general during this conflict, it won considerable attention during the negotiation process and in the post-conflict political transformation of the M19.

Mazurana, Dyan and Linda Eckerbom Cole, 2013. 'Women, Girls and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)', ch. 9, pp. 194–214, in (ed.) Carol Cohn, *Women and Wars*, Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity Press.

The essence of this book chapter is a reflection on why DDR has traditionally overlooked the presence of women and girls who have filled different types of roles in armed forces and groups. The authors point to examples from different African countries – including Mozambique, Angola, Burundi, the Republic of Congo and Rwanda – where women have participated as combatants, but have been only weakly represented in the DDR programs relative to their actual participation during the war. Thus, their main question is: "Where are the women and girls in DDR?" The authors point out that actually the percentage of women in armed groups is often higher than their counterparts in the government forces and militias. Finally, the chapter makes a comparison between Africa and Latin America, arguing that the case of DDR in Latin America looks different from Africa for a number of reasons. First and foremost, women's rights and grievances were given priority in many of the leftist movements in Latin America, particularly in the conflicts from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, something which the authors state motivated women and girls to join the armed groups. This chapter thus raises an important question about why the large differences in recognition of female fighters exist between Africa and Latin America.

Macdonald, Alice, 2008. 'New Wars: Forgotten Warriors': Why Have Girl Fighters Been Excluded from Western Representations of Conflict in Sierra Leone?' *Africa Development*, Vol XXXIII, No. 3, pp. 135–145.

The author of this article, Alice Macdonald, argues that although child soldiers have been seen as emblematic elements of what she terms 'the new wars' – or intrastate conflicts after the Cold War – the presence of girl fighters have been continually ignored by the international community and generally neglected in academic writing. She refers in particular to the case of Sierra Leone, where girls made up 25 percent of the child soldiers and 8 percent of the total numbers of fighters. Macdonald makes the point that although some girls used their power to protect the more vulnerable ones in the insurgency camps, girls also committed atrocities. Likewise, adult women constituted some of the most violent and powerful combatants, assuming names such as 'Queen Cut Hands', 'Lieutenant Cause Trouble' and 'Lady Jungle' referring to the Truth and Reconciliation Mission's Report on Sierra Leone from 2007. The author points out that the misunderstanding of the complex roles girls had during the conflict had direct negative consequences for their reintegration into society. Thus, only a very low percentage of the girls and women participated in the DDR programs.

Macdonald explains the international community's tendency to neglect girls' and women's active roles as combatants – and sometimes also as perpetrators of violence – on the basis of the western world's post-Cold War narratives of conflicts in the South within the framework of 'New Barbarianism' and the 'underdevelopment paradigm'. This means that men – and particularly young men in Africa – are considered as aggressive, and likely to get involved in conflict, whereas girls and women need to be protected (by outsiders). Macdonald thus raises very critical questions about the agenda of humanitarianism and she also criticizes the characterization of young men that much of the youth bulge approach provides. She argues that the individual experiences and agency of the girls in Sierra Leone were ignored in favor of a homogenized picture "which assumed the singular experience of girls in war" (p. 142). Finally, she warns against the western tendency to sacrifice the individual to the collective following the assumption that girls are biologically pacifist whereas men by nature are aggressive.

Menocal, Alina Rocha and Pilar Domingo, 2015. 'Colombia's Women, Tried by War, Find New Power', *Foreign Policy*, 15 October. foreignpolicy.com/2015/10/15/colombias-women-tried-by-war-find-new-power

This is a very short article, but one that highlights important aspects of the negotiation process between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP – aspects that might have important implications for the potential demobilization and post-conflict phase of this prolonged conflict. Women in Colombia have been disproportionately affected by the conflict, but have also made strong efforts and progress towards empowerment. They have been critical and strategic in their engagement both with the formal political system and with civil society, and have thus been able to ensure that the manner in which Colombia responds to the conflict reflects the particular experiences and challenges faced by women. Since the negotiations between the government and the FARC-EP were announced in 2012, Colombian women's organizations have worked together with international women's organizations for the inclusion of women in the peace process. The authors point out that as a result of this pressure, Colombia's President Santos appointed two women with greater decision-making power into the government's team. Although they emphasize that is not enough, the authors also add that with one-third of the delegates in Havana being women, this is above global

averages. Another important aspect of the peace process is that a ‘dedicated’ gender sub-commission has been established with a mandate to ensure a gender perspective and that women's rights are included in the agreements. Finally, the article stresses that over 60 survivors – mostly women – were invited to the table in Havana to share their experiences and expectations. The authors emphasize that this is especially significant, since such encounters between peace negotiators and conflict survivors – particularly women – are “almost without precedent in the field of conflict resolution”.

Gender and the Political Economy of DDR



Ex-combatants growing coffee in the community of Santa Anita, Guatemala. Photos: Wenche Iren Hauge

Some of the earlier articles on this topic – from the late 1990s and early 2000 such as Sørensen (1998) and Barth (2002) – focus in particular on the general lack of possibilities for female fighters to participate in vocational training courses and skills training, and on the importance of education. More recent literature also tries to explain why women are neglected. Jennings (2009) points to the securitization of men and the desecuritization of women as a framework within which to understand and analyze this.

Jennings, Kathleen, M., 2009. ‘The Political Economy of DDR in Liberia: a gendered critique’, *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp. 475-494.

This article points out that Liberia saw an unprecedented level of women registering for DDR, but that just over 50 percent of the female DDR participants finally accessed the reintegration programs, compared to almost 70 percent of the men. The author argues that this is due to the perception of men’s reintegration as more critical than women’s reintegration, based on the assumption that organized violence will recur if men are left idle. The concept of idleness is discussed in the article, emphasizing that the way it is applied also implies the thinking that men may not use their time to be family caretakers, whereas women can do. The reintegration program in Liberia was securitized because of the conflation of male ex-combatants’ idleness with instability. Consequently, the impact was the privileging of male ex-combatants for employment in the labor market. The article therefore has as its main recommendation that the UN should “make every effort to avoid perpetuating contested and/or outdated perceptions of women’s roles and capabilities in war and peace” (p. 489).

Sørensen, Birgitte, 1998. 'Women and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Issues and Sources', Occasional Paper, No. 3. Geneva: The War-torn Societies Project. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

In this paper, Sørensen focuses on the economic environment of post-conflict reconstruction, and questions whether this environment is conducive to women's empowerment, or if it rather reinforces economic marginalization and increases women's vulnerability. The paper discusses formal sector employment for women, and Sørensen emphasizes that this is – on the one hand – closely linked to access to education and skills training and – on the other hand – linked to political manipulation of gender roles in response to national economic priorities. Up until now, female soldiers have had difficulty in accessing DDR training programs for vocational skills and business management, and on the return to their own societies they are faced with lack of skills, education and the resources required to engage in income-generating activities. These problems are also compounded by uncertainty about their social status and roles. Sørensen emphasizes that it is important for female ex-fighters to get access to skills training and education, but also to ensure that these income-generating activities have relevance and sustainability, and that they are not only characterized by cultural appropriateness.

Barth, Elise Fredrikke, 2002. Peace as Disappointment: The Reintegration of Female Soldiers in Post Conflict Societies. A Comparative Study from Africa. PRIO Report 3/2002. International Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).

In her report, Barth points to a strong link between education and post-conflict political activity among female ex-combatants from Eritrea. Her study reveals a huge gap between the female ex-combatants that found a niche within the guerrilla organization EPLF's circles after the war, and those that did not. The most striking characteristic of the first group is that they were educated. Another issue that the author raises is the importance of identity. Many of the female ex-fighters in this study had a positive experience of their roles in the guerrilla during the war and they identified themselves strongly with these roles. However, as the title of the report, *Peace as Disappointment*, reveals, many of these women experienced a setback with the peace and felt that they were reintegrated back into poverty and traditional gender roles.



Ex-combatants in Nepal during the Cheque distribution process. Photo: Chiranjibi Bhandari

Masculinity and the DDR Process

This literature reveals how strongly perceptions and ideals of masculinity are influenced by context, and how the more violent ideals of masculinity affect women. Theidon (2009) explains the importance of the body for Colombian men against a background of poverty and marginalization in a context where their bodily capital is what they have to trade at the labor market. This literature also points out how societal expectations towards men to assist their family economically often crash with a reality of unemployment and loss of dignity (Theidon, 2009; Vess et al., 2013). The consequence is often that men turn to violent activities that can bring income and a feeling of strengthened masculinity. In some societies, the rituals marking the transition from adolescent to adult are also important. The combination of frustration over social conditions with the availability of armed groups and weapons make the entrance into these groups – and the use of violence – function as a *rite de passage*, as explained by Woodbury (2011), where she refers to adolescents and young men in Sub-Saharan Africa. Inherent in this literature is also the importance of the family as a positive asset. This is pointed out by Theidon (2009), where she mentions the family as a potential resource in efforts to 'disarm masculinity' in DDR processes. Ties to the family are often why men have chosen to disarm and demobilize.

Theidon, Kimberly, 2009. 'Reconstructing Masculinities: The Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Colombia', *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No.1, pp.1–34.

Based on her case study of former combatants in Colombia, Kimberley Theidon argues that successful reintegration requires more than just focusing on the goals of DDR programs and justice measures. It is essential to have a gendered analysis of both DDR and transitional justice processes, including analyses of the important links between weapons, masculinities and violence. Her work in Colombia includes interviews with 137 male and 33 female ex-combatants from AUC, the FARC and the ELN and has been motivated in part by a desire to understand how violent forms of masculinity are shaped and sustained, and how DDR programs might more effectively 'disarm masculinity' following armed conflict. Theidon builds on a concept of 'hegemonic masculinity', arguing that in any given context there is a form of masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in the gender relations and obscures alternative masculinities that exist in any given context and within each individual. She also emphasizes that in spite of important differences between the young men she and her assistant have interviewed, and between the groups in which they fought, there is very much of a shared class background. Their militarized masculinity results from combat training, which includes bodily and emotional indoctrination. Thus, Theidon states that "Their bodily capital – and the high premium placed on physical force and prowess with a weapon – may be all they have to trade on the labor market" (p.23). On the other hand, the demobilized reveal much passion for their family, and it offers a key incentive to remain civilian. This is so, although the women, including wives of male ex-combatants, also experience much violence in the private sphere. Theidon ends her article by stressing the need to demilitarize these violent and hegemonic models of masculinity, and also to make non-violent options more visible, valued and desirable through the DDR process.

Vess, Joseph; Gary Barker; Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini and Alexa Hassink, 2013. *The Other Side of Gender: Men as Critical Agents of Change*. Special Report. Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace (USIP).

This report argues that in the context of conflict, men have often been perceived through a single lens as perpetrators of violence. However, men's experiences in conflict are much wider than that – including as victims, survivors and witnesses. In the follow-up of Security Council Resolution 1325, practitioners have understood that focusing on women to the exclusion of men can do damage to their efforts and weaken the sustainability of their work. Consequently, incorporating the perspectives of men has gradually become a more important part of the women, peace and security agenda. The challenge here is to see men through a gender lens – by understanding gender as socially constructed rather than biologically determined. The authors remind the reader that only limited evidence is found that men are more inherently violent than women. Therefore it is necessary to explore how social norms and structures shape men's propensity toward violence – and how they can change and help establish peace. In spite of this, data show that men are far more likely to constitute the perpetrators of violence and to be victims – both outside of conflict and during war – than women. The drivers of male violence are multi-faceted, but the loss of dignity and ability to support one's family economically constitute part of it, along with early exposures to violence, traumatic indoctrination during military service and war and the temptation for arms – because of the protection and income that the possession of a weapon can provide for male combatants. Thus, the authors argue that “long-term peace and stability can only be achieved by understanding how militarized male identities are constructed and how they can be deconstructed.” Finally, they mention a series of programs that have been effective in helping and assisting male victims, developing healthier non-violent behaviors and male identities, and engaging men in a positive way – such as to support women's economic empowerment in a post-conflict setting.

Woodbury, Laura, 2011. ‘Reconstructing Gender Identity for Child Combatants in Post-Conflict African Societies’, *Journal of International Service*, Vol. 20, No. 1, Spring, pp. 19–35.

This article focuses on the cultural construction of masculinity and how it is manifested within conflict. It is based on a study of young men in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the author, Laura Woodbury's expressed intention is to prepare for a discussion about the needs of male ex-combatants and how these can be integrated into DDR programming. Woodbury emphasizes that gender is socially constructed and intricately tied to the culture it resides within. In many communities within Sub-Saharan Africa, it is common that males undergo a specific ceremonial process – or a rite of passage – to symbolically make the transition to adulthood. In some cases the ceremony may emphasize a specific set of skills important to the source of livelihood within that culture. It is often related to the ability to attain some kind of financial independence, employment or income, and finally to start a family. Within a war context, certain elements of traditional masculinities are highlighted and adjusted to support the armed struggle. Woodbury argues that this is particularly so within conflicts where political motivation and ideology is less obvious, and that the worst types of violence tend to happen exactly in these conflicts where there is a political vacuum and violence becomes an end in itself. She argues that “Conflict provides the opportunity for alternative interpretations of masculinity, particularly in situations where traditional ideas of masculinity and malehood are under threat from lack of economic opportunity” (p.27). As a response to this she argues that post-conflict societies that

want to achieve a sustainable peace and community healing need to “eradicate the normalized use of violence” and also to disconnect the use of violence from masculinity. In general also nonviolent involvement in politics and other forms of civic engagement should be emphasized in the DDR process.

Gender and Transitional Justice

The transitional justice literature in general is relatively young. It began in the 1980s mainly with work produced by US political scientists and economists in relation to post-conflict states in Latin America and Eastern Europe. The literature on gender and transitional justice addresses various aspects of transitional justice, but the main focus has been placed on institutional dimensions, particularly on the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC). However, the literature also contrasts juridical approaches to justice with the challenges that social change brings about for women – as done by Buckley-Zistel and Stanley (2012). Many problems remain the same or become worse after an armed conflict, with patterns of violence surviving and taking on new forms, continuing to make women victims in a way that the juridical processes have not been able to capture. It represents a problem that women most often do not participate in negotiation processes, and are therefore less able to influence the agenda of the DDR process in general and of the transitional justice process in particular. In her book on the transitional justice process in East Timor, Harris Rimmer (2010) analyses in more depth the contextual dimensions of transitional justice and the limitations that this implies for access to retributive justice for women. She discusses the balance between a legalist and a realist approach in efforts to try to bring the maximum out of a transitional justice process for female victims.



Drawings from the war by Guatemalan children. Photo: Wenche Iren Hauge

Buckley-Zistel, Susanne and Ruth Stanley, 2012. *Gender in Transitional Justice*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

This book covers various central topics related to gender in transitional justice, including retributive justice; transitional justice and social change; the potentials and limits of agency in transitional justice; and finally the politics of justice and reconciliation. With regard to retributive justice, the role of the International Criminal Court is discussed in chapter one, and the author of this chapter, Louise Chappell, emphasizes that gender-related crimes have not been sufficiently or effectively prioritized by the ICC. She does, however, have more positive comments regarding the restorative attempts and community-building efforts of the ICC and its post-conflict gendered empowerment. Part of the problem concerning retributive justice is, as pointed out by the author of chapter two, Ní Aoláin, that there is a gap between the validity of a norm and its enforcement – which particular judicial settings contribute to upholding – and that the gendered under-enforcement is partly related to the under-representation or exclusion of women from peace processes and peace treaties where and when the process of transitional justice is initiated.

The book also focuses on the limits of transitional justice's potentials for contributing to social transformation after violence. Thus, in chapter four, Sigsworth and Valji highlight the limitations inherent in the gendered definitions of 'violation', 'political' and 'transition', as these fail to respond to the challenges of new and different forms of political violence taking place after the official ending of a conflict. For example, in South Africa, the construction of damaged, violent masculinities during apartheid was followed by perceived loss of masculine power – accompanied by vulnerability and insecurity – and an extreme level of violence against women. Sexual identity may also make a big difference in transitional justice, as pointed out by Angelika von Wahl in chapter seven, where she compares homosexual victims of Nazi crimes with those of Jewish victims of Holocaust. Both crimes – although very different in scope and extent – occurred at the same time, in the same country and by the same regime. However, homosexual victims did not receive any political support, neither by the new German government, the Allies, the courts, the media or society, in contrast to the Jews. Finally, the last section of the book focuses on politics of justice and reconciliation. In her chapter on East Timor, Elisabeth Porter shows how the Timorese Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) managed to place an emphasis on integrating a gender-sensitive approach to its work and to the post-conflict and peacebuilding measures introduced in East Timor. Thus, although justice and reconciliation is a challenging field, examples of good practices exist.

Rimmer, Susan Harris, 2010. *Gender and Transitional Justice: The Women of East Timor*. London and New York: Routledge.

This book focuses on the role of international law in relation to East Timorese women engaged with transitional justice processes from 1999 to 2009. The author, Susan Harris Rimmer, analyses the transitional justice processes with a view to two theoretical approaches – the 'legalist' versus the 'realist' arguments over the obligation to punish in international law. She then contrasts these directions with views from a critical feminist perspective. International lawyers in general believe that international law is central to transitional justice because it imposes an obligation on states to punish those responsible for the most serious violations of international law. From this follows the 'legalist' view that trials must be among the mechanisms chosen. The 'realist' position on the other side argues that such choices should be left entirely to the post-

conflict state and its concerns about how to establish a democratic and stable society. Rimmer holds that both of these positions are based on the absence and silence of women. Chapters four and five of the book relates the history of the Jakarta and Dili trials and assesses the operation of these trials against the overall experiences of female victims, witnesses and affected women in general.

Finally, Rimmer argues that the international struggle for the full inclusion of women in the paradigm of universal human rights has reached a limit where it needs reinvention. She discusses ideas that could 'reinvent' approaches to international justice. In light of the criticism against the weaknesses of transitional justice for not being inclusive of women's experiences, Rimmer asks if it might be a more strategic approach to seek for other non-legal strategies against impunity. One idea that she launches is "a reinvention (or subversion) of the concept of a war veteran", with the intention of giving women and children the legal status and benefits of a veteran just like a combatant "if their suffering has contributed to or been a consequence of the struggle for independence" (p. 15).

Pankhurst, Donna, 2008. *Gendered Peace: Women's Struggles for Post-War Justice and Reconciliation*. UNRISD. New York and London: Routledge.

This book covers a variety of topics, such as international criminal tribunals, truth and reconciliation commissions, post-conflict reconstruction, masculinity and women's post-conflict political participation. However, the main focus is on transitional justice and reconciliation. Pankhurst states that in the immediate post-conflict situation, the main focus tends to be on the behavior of the state, to ensure that military and police personnel no longer act outside of the law through arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial executions, detentions and torture. Even if rape has been widespread during the war, it is very difficult to start prosecutions for rape in a post-conflict context if this process was not started during the peace process or immediately afterwards.

However, the book contains chapters where the authors Walsh and Nowrojee highlight the lessons learnt from – respectively – the International Criminal Court for Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Nowrojee holds that some lessons were learnt from Rwanda that could be applied to the post-conflict context of Sierra Leone. In spite of this, the main conclusions from her review are the very poor way in which female survivors were treated in the justice processes and the low priority given by the court to the prosecution of such crimes.

Since 1974 and up to 2008 there have been 25 truth commissions in different parts of the world, taking on many different forms. Pankhurst states that abuses of women are both the most under-reported to truth commissions and the least prosecuted. The challenges of the truth commissions are illustrated by the example from South Africa, in the book chapter by Manjoo. In South Africa the women constituted the majority of witnesses for acts of violence committed against others, but in spite of this, only a few of the women initially spoke about acts of violence committed against themselves. After pressure from female activists, the TRC tried to create a more enabling environment where women could feel more safe and comfortable to speak. However, even then, only a few women spoke publicly about sexual violation. Some hearings where only women participated were more successful. Pankhurst emphasizes how the example from South Africa illustrates the complexity of the problem.

DDR and Gendered Identity

This literature is relatively scarce. The debate about the representation of women partly touches upon the issue of identity, but it does so only superficially, as is the case with much of the literature. In her study of female ex-combatants in Guatemala, Hauge (2008) seeks to explain why some of the women became socially and politically active after their reintegration, whereas others did not. She finds that much of the explanation lies in a balance between identity and how the reintegration was organized. The difference between those that reintegrated individually and those that stayed in collectives or communities together with their fellow ex-combatants was particularly important. Another approach to identity is found in the article by Fox (2004), which focuses on girl soldiers. Normally, the literature on girl soldiers is located within the discourse on child soldiers, but Fox highlights the brutal gendered abuses of girl soldiers as females, and asks if their primary identity is that of a female or that of a child. As her article constituted a relatively early contribution on this topic, it came at a time when the main assumption was still that child soldiers are mainly boys, and their DDR process was organized accordingly.

Hauge, Wenche, 2008. 'Group identity – a neglected asset: Determinants of social and political participation among female ex-fighters in Guatemala', *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 295–316.



A mural in the El Horizonte community of ex-combatants in Northern Guatemala.

Photo: Wenche Iren Hauge

In this article, Hauge shows how the level of social and political participation among female ex-combatants in Guatemala varies according to their socio-economic background, their experiences from the war and how they were reintegrated. In general DDR programs have a tendency to focus on the security and the return to normalcy at the cost of the focus on more long-term economic, social and political reintegration of the ex-combatants. After wars with a long duration, it is also correct to state that there is no situation of normalcy to return to, as family ties and social networks have been broken up and the networks and social structures established during the war have

become more important. Thus, several of the female fighters from the Guatemalan armed conflict chose to reintegrate into cooperatives together with their fellow male and female ex-combatants. This article is based on a study where Hauge interviewed 44 female ex-fighters from different guerrilla organizations in Guatemala, women that chose different modes of reintegration: individually or into co-operatives. It came out that the most socially and politically active were the women living in the co-operatives. The only exception was that women with higher education, whether reintegrated individually or collectively, were the most active of all. However, the women with higher education were quite few. The second most important condition appeared to be the social factor which gave the female ex-combatants the possibility to keep their new won identity from the war – by continuing to live together with their fellow ex-combatants – in a post-conflict situation. On the basis of these findings, the author emphasizes the need to balance the focus on security in DDR processes against the need for a post-conflict peacebuilding process that is more concerned with identity and sustainability and a reconstruction of the political process in the country that involves ex-combatants and female ex-combatants in particular.

Ortega, Luisa Maria Dietrich, 2015. 'Untapped Resources for Peace. A Comparative Study of Women's Organizations of Guerrilla Ex-combatants in Colombia and El Salvador', pp. 232–250 in (ed.) Seema Shekhawat, *Female Combatants in Conflict and Peace*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

This book, *Female Combatants in Conflict and Peace*, touches upon a wide variety of topics, such as: women in combat, the role of girl soldiers, female participation in peace processes and female combatants in DDR processes. However, most of the 14 chapters are focused on DDR processes and the post-conflict situation. It also has a wide geographical span, with case studies from Israel, Syria, Kashmir, India, Sierra Leone, Peru, South Africa, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Colombia. The book contains two chapters focusing on Colombia, one of them entitled 'Demobilized Women in Colombia: Embodiment Performativity and Social Reconciliation'. This chapter focuses on the effects of feminine and masculine identities and structural gendered violence. The other chapter, by Ortega, contains a comparative study of women's organizations of guerrilla ex-combatants in El Salvador and Colombia, and seeks to explore the concrete contributions of these organizations to gender-responsive DDR and peacebuilding processes in El Salvador and Colombia.

In El Salvador, two of the guerrilla movement FMLN's political-military organizations created organizations of female combatants in 1990, two years before the signing of the peace agreement. These were: Asociación de Mujeres por la Dignidad y la Vida (Women's Association for Dignity and Life) or, Dignas, and Movimiento de Mujeres Mélida Anaya Montes (Mélida Anaya Montes Movement), Mélicas. In Colombia, the guerrilla organization M19 created the women's organization Mujeres de Abril (Women of April) in 1989, when they were staying in a peace negotiation camp. In 2000, ten years after the demobilization process was initiated, the Colectivo de Mujeres Ex-Combatientes (Collective of Female Ex-combatants) was founded to group together former female insurgents from different groups.

The author of this chapter explains how tensions around organizational objectives between the female ex-combatant organizations and their original guerrilla organizations were resolved differently among the organizations in El Salvador and Colombia. In El Salvador, Las Dignas sought autonomy from the FMLN, whereas Las Mélicas initially remained true to their insurgent origins, but later sought

independence, mainly as a response to criticism from the women's movement in El Salvador. In Colombia, the female organizations had been created during the phase of peace negotiations and after demobilization. They were thus also less tied to the guerrilla structures and did not experience the issue of organizational independence and identity in the same way as in El Salvador. On the other hand it also had the effect of limited opportunities to channel their demands for change as compared to the El Salvadorian female ex-combatants' organizations. Colectivo de Mujeres Ex-Combatientes in Colombia has in particular focused on shared identity as ex-combatants (regardless of particular insurgent group) as a common key motivator for collective action, reaching out to female ex-combatants dispersed throughout Colombia, interviewing them and gathering their experiences as peace builders. In the beginning, this organization only had women with an M19 insurgent past as members, however, recently efforts to open up and also include former ex-combatants from the FARC are underway.

Already in September 2012, the Colectivo de Mujeres Ex-Combatientes issued a public statement welcoming the announcement of negotiations between the Colombian government and FARC, and in October 2013 handed in a document to the negotiation table in Havana. Members of the organization have also met with delegates from the Colombian government for peace talks, providing experiences and insights for a gender-responsive peace process and public policy.

The author points out that, based on their identity and networks, the female ex-combatant organizations in both El Salvador and Colombia have organized larger meetings to share their experiences. Thus female ex-combatants from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Chiapas (Mexico) gathered in El Salvador in 1995 to discuss the participation of women in armed conflicts from a feminist perspective. Likewise, in 2005, Colectivo de Mujeres organized a meeting that gathered female ex-combatants from Central America and Colombia to discuss and reflect on female ex-combatants' political participation.

The author of this chapter emphasizes the important role that these organizations have played in peacebuilding and in a post-conflict context to facilitate women's political participation, and has some suggestions for the planning of DDR processes in the future, based on these experiences. One of her observations is that conventional gendered capacity building needs to be tailored to the particular worldview of the former combatants, for example using Marxist-Feminist approaches. The possibility of exchange and collaboration with women's organizations in other countries is also important for political participation and long-term alliances. Another important observation from her research is that formal and informal political participation of female ex-combatants depends on covering their basic economic needs. Finally, sufficient funds need to be made available for the participation of organizations of female ex-combatants in peacebuilding projects.

Fox, Mary-Jane, 2004. 'Girl Soldiers: Human Security and Gendered Insecurity', *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 465–479.

The challenges and issues related to child soldiers in general – and girl soldiers in particular – are the same as issues that underpin the human security perspective. The author, Mary-Jane Fox, seeks to establish a preliminary link between girl soldiers' insecurity and human security thinking in general. This is one of the first articles to focus on girl soldiers in a DDR context – outside of the purely child-soldier literature. The author states that her work “represents simply the beginning of a process of identifying and locating girl soldiers as a gendered security concern” (p. 477). She directs the focus through a fundamental question about girl soldiers' identity. As girl soldiers sometimes experience brutal gendered abuses as females, Fox's question is whether their primary identity is that of a female or that of a child. When girl soldiers have been observed, this has mainly been within populations of child soldiers, although for long the assumption was that all child soldiers were boys. In general there has been a tendency to support established myths that girls do not or cannot fight and thus that girls found within non-state armed groups do not constitute military support. Instead they have therefore been categorized as 'camp followers'. The consequences have been that DDR programs have tended to overlook girls. Even when child soldiers were acknowledged and also girls were included in the DDR programs, aid packages would contain only male clothing and did for example not include equipment for female hygiene. Fox refers to different cases of non-state armed groups including cases where the girls were abducted and cases where they joined voluntarily. However, she argues that independently of whether it was forced or voluntary recruitment, these girls will have problems integrating back into a society that they might have left on their own initiative or that might have failed to protect them from abductions and forced recruitment. It is therefore important that they be given proper assistance through the DDR programs, and that the failure to provide them with the security needed as girls be taken seriously and considered in a human security perspective.

Contextual Aspects of Reintegration and Gender

This literature discusses various aspects of reintegration, such as how the genders are represented in the DDR process and in the particular society in focus, and issues related to cultural and social characteristics of local communities and regions where ex-combatants are going to be reintegrated. For example Bleie (2012), comparing Somalia and Nepal, illustrates the important role of social and moral gatekeepers in local communities for the acceptance and peaceful reintegration of ex-combatants. With regard to how the genders are represented, Hudson (2010), in her study of African conflicts, uses the tools of African feminism and questions essentialist approaches to analyses of women in peace and conflict. She emphasizes that women's identities are complex and cannot be understood without reference to context. Thus, African feminism is characterized by a balance between universal normative principles of gender equality and traditional values.

Bleie, Tone, 2012. Post-war moral communities in Somalia and Nepal: Gendered practices of exclusion and inclusion. Tromsø: Centre for Peace Studies, University of Tromsø.

This report aims at highlighting the social dimension of gender-sensitive reintegration. It looks at three dimensions of post-war gender patterns along which DDR intersects: 1) The level of impact reintegration has on women and men's agency as individuals or collective actors in general. 2) The gender policies of post-war states. 3) The level of exclusion or inclusion – and acceptance – of the reintegrating ex-combatants by key moral and social gatekeepers of the society. In general the report pays most attention to point three, and it introduces the concept of a 'moral community'. This concept is applied to two very different cases of disengagement from armed violence: to gangs of pirates in Somalia that recruit young men only and to the Maoist militant movement in Nepal that recruits both adults and minors of both sexes. In Somalia, the recruitment to a criminal armed group, as well as the disengagement from this group, is determined by gender-specific kinship and community relations. Efforts to return to civilian life are in particular influenced by the attitudes and positive or negative sanctions of male and female guardians and local imams. In Nepal the disengagement from armed groups is found in the constellations of caste kinship, gender and community relations – for females – not least in the attitudes of elderly women in the community. The contrasting cases of Somalia and Nepal contribute new understandings of the determinants found in the local community and its culture for both recruitment to and disengagement from armed groups.

Hudson, Heidi, 2010. 'Peace building through a gender lens and the challenges of implementation in Rwanda and Cote d'Ivoire', chapter 13, pp. 256–280 in (ed.) Laura Sjoberg, *Gender and International Security: Feminist Perspectives*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

This chapter on peacebuilding by Heidi Hudson constitutes only one among a broad range of topics covered in the book edited by Laura Sjoberg. The book itself spans different themes such as gendered perspectives on the military, war and the state's performance in international protection; gendered security theories on power transition and environmental security; gendered security actors; gender perspectives on arms control and finally discussions about 'hypermasculinity'. Hudson's chapter on peacebuilding is particularly relevant to gender perspectives of DDR and post-conflict situations, as it highlights the importance of context in the way gender issues are approached in this phase. The author uses the tools of African feminism to study African conflicts and she questions essentialist approaches to women in peace and conflict. Hudson warns against representing women as a homogenous group where all have the same security needs, since this hides both differences between the women and the power dynamics between them. Women's identities are complex and cannot be understood without reference to context. Thus she also states that "African feminisms recognize hybrid identities which at once connect with international feminisms' protests against gender subordination and delineate specific ground for African approaches to African women's needs and goals" (p.258). Thus African feminism is characterized by a balance between universal normative principles of gender equality and traditional values such as *ubuntu* (this means "interconnectiveness of each human being, consensus-building and solidarity"). Hudson illustrates some of her points relevant to transitional justice and DDR processes with examples from Rwanda and Cote d'Ivoire, for example the *Gacaca Courts* in Rwanda, which represents the revival of a traditional tribal system of justice that earlier was used to deal with

family disputes, cattle theft etc. In this system, women are being elected as judges as it recognizes that women often are the primary witnesses of genocide and that they can play a key role in post-conflict reconciliation. In general the author places much emphasis on the needs for a culturally sensitive approach to gender-mainstreaming in peacebuilding, not least with regard to the DDR process and the implementation phase of peace agreements.

Azkue, Irantzu Mendiá, 2014. *La división sexual del trabajo por la paz: Género y rehabilitación posbélica en El Salvador y Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Hegoa, Instituto de Estudios sobre Desarrollo y Cooperación Internacional. Universidad del País Vasco. Madrid: Editorial Technos.

This book explores how the different approaches within feminist theory on war, DDR processes and post-conflict peacebuilding have been applied to the work of women's organizations in El Salvador and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The analysis is conducted with a strong consciousness about the different characteristics of these wars and their international context. The author, Azkue, argues that the representation of the role of women in peacebuilding created by international aid organizations is based on essentialist stereotyping of women as naturally inclined towards peace, and that this view configures in the debate in a way that prevents the exposition of the complex relationship between identity and gender, and the important role that class and ethnicity play in this. The book is based on a study of the experiences of women's organizations during post-conflict reconstruction phases, covering the years 1992–2009 in the case of El Salvador, and 1995–2009 in the case of Bosnia Herzegovina. The author compares the characteristics and contexts of the participation of women's organizations in political, social and economic processes since the signing of the peace agreements in El Salvador and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Azkue highlights the differences in the international response to these two conflicts, the El Salvadorian taking place in the context of the Cold War and the Bosnian after the Cold War, being characterized as a “new war”, and with a much larger international presence than in El Salvador. The study is based on a series of interviews in the years 2006–2009.

Liberal feminism is the approach that has influenced donors of international aid the most – as this current is well placed within the liberal ideology of western and US policies in general. Other approaches like socialist, radical and postcolonial feminism – although important in the empirical world – are not in the same way accorded space in the international discourse. These trends were important in El Salvador, where the post-conflict women's organizations – that were quite autonomous but highly ideological and with close ties to the FMLN – gradually became stronger, and initiated a political strategy to influence the government and the political parties. In comparison, the post-conflict women's organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina played an important role with regard to the civilian population, and especially in the assistance of the victims of violence, but did not have any political leverage. In this way – while the women's organizations in El Salvador were associated with actorness – the organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina were “victimized”. The author argues that the organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina have remained without much capacity for political action and autonomy towards international actors, and adds that the unequal distribution of resources seems to have fallen out of the female organizations' agenda, which is – on the other hand – dominated by preoccupations for identity conflict. In general, the international organizations' and donor's work for gender equality in Bosnia-Herzegovina seem to have strengthened international cooperation more than the women's organizations in the country.

Ogura Kiyoko, 2012. 'Challenges of combatants' rehabilitation and army integration: Perspectives from Maoist cantonments in Nepal' ch. 14, pp. 217-228 in (eds.) Véronique Dudouet, Hans J. Giessmann and Karin Planta, *Post-War Security Transitions: Participatory peacebuilding after asymmetric conflicts*. London and New York: Routledge.

This chapter by Kiyoko Ogura analyses the situation of female and male ex-combatants in Nepal in the context of the prolonged period of transition in Nepal, during which the ex-combatants had to stay in cantonments. It builds on interviews conducted by Ogura in the period July–August 2008, interviews that include PLA members from various levels of the hierarchy, from the Chief Commander down to rank-and-file soldiers. The war in Nepal came to an end on 21 November 2006, when the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN (Maoist) and other political forces signed a Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA). On this very same day, the seven divisions of the Maoist People's Liberation Army (PLA) were assembled in seven main cantonments with 21 satellite cantonments. The ex-combatants stayed in these cantonments for six years. In 2007 the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) publicized that it had registered 31,318 combatants. There was a second stage of verification, when many combatants were absent, and the figure then came down to 19,602 combatants. Of these, 3,846 (20 %) were female combatants. All the ex-combatants were affected by the long stay in the cantonments, but the female fighters in particular were affected. During the war, most mothers had to leave their children with relatives or at homes or communes run by the party. In 2006, when they were relocated to the cantonments, they could still not take their children back because of the lack of schooling facilities there. In addition, the long time in the cantonments also brought with it the formation of marriage-like relationships between combatants within the cantonments, resulting in a baby boom. This led some division commanders to introduce a regulation stipulating that pregnant female combatants or female combatants with children younger than three had to stay outside the camp, to avoid a 'refugee camp' like situation. This strategy led to strong feelings of discontent on the part of many of the female combatants, particularly since women's rights had been of high importance on the Maoist agenda, and since many of the female combatants had been promoted to high-ranking leadership positions, such as political commissars and commanders during the war. Now many female combatants being mothers outside the camps felt isolated both from activities in the cantonments and from politics.

Gender Dimensions of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)

This commented bibliography contains summaries of academic articles, books, book chapters, reports and policy briefs on the gender dimensions of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR).

The literature reviewed focuses on a variety of aspects related to the gender dimension of DDR processes, such as women as actors and victims, implications of the perceptions of masculinity, transitional justice, the political economy of DDR processes, gendered identity,

and finally, the contextual aspects of DDR processes. The topics are all related to one another. The literature on transitional justice and gender mainly focuses on aspects related to women as victims. The literature on masculinity reveals that, most often, the dominant perceptions of masculinity tend to produce female victims. The focus on the political economy of DDR processes, on the other hand, highlights the more active participation of women in conflicts and the failure to recognize this – taking into account that women

are often not sufficiently included in DDR processes.

Whereas some of the literature is essentially topic focused, the commented bibliography also contains a series of country-focused analyses. These include Aceh, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, East-Timor, El Salvador, Eritrea, Guatemala, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Nepal, Rwanda, Somalia, Sierra Leone and South Africa.